

SINO-SOVIET BORDER TENSIONS

1. We believe that nervousness concerning the long Sino-Soviet frontier is mainly a Chinese phenomenon, and appears to be the result of systematic Russian provocation --perhaps beginning as early as 1960--combined with Peiping's worries concerning Chinese vulnerabilities to subversion, particularly in Sinkiang. Such evidence as we have concerning Soviet activity on the Russian side of the border suggests that Moscow has done little more than make preparations to cope with possible Chinese recklessness. The current military posture on both sides of the line is defensive.

CHRONOLOGY

1960 - Peiping issued a major polemical statement on 6 September 1960 charging that the USSR had created border troubles in 1960 and 1962 and that the situation remains "unsettled." No details of the 1960 incident were offered, and no intelligence is available indicating the nature of any such incident then.

Spring 1962 - The 6 September Chinese statement noted that in early 1962 the USSR had "enticed and coerced" tens of thousands of "Chinese citizens" from the Ili area of Sinkiang across the border and given them asylum. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] indicate that this Chinese charge is substantially correct. While the incident was almost certainly instigated by the Soviets, there was, however, no reported Soviet coercion, nor, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] was any needed. All the Soviets had to do was to spread reports among Uighur and Kazakh ethnic minorities living along the border that living conditions were better on the Soviet side and to let it be known that the Soviets had lifted all restrictions on border crossing. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] about 8,000 Kazakhs crossed over in the Tacheng area during April 1962, followed by more than 50,000 Uighurs and Kazakhs in the immediate vicinity of Ili city in May. Riots occurred at Ili when

the Chinese belatedly realized how serious the situation had become and acted to stop the flow. After May 1962 the Chinese tightened border controls. They have also moved in 'agricultural' troops to settle key stretches of the border. Security measures were evidently successful, for no reports of large-scale border crossings have been received since.

September 1962 - The first open indication of mounting Chinese concern is to be found in statements at the Central Committee plenum in September 1962. These contained implied charges that the Russians had engaged in "intrusion", "provocation", "aggression", and "subversion" against China. What we later learned about the major border incidents in Sinkiang during the spring of 1962 helped to dispel the ambiguities in these Chinese statements.

Second Half of 1962 - The first reports were received suggesting increased Chinese sensitivity on the Manchurian border. It is believed that the Soviets were also trying to stir up trouble among ethnic minorities in this area, although no major incidents like the Sinkiang event are known to have occurred in Manchuria.

Soviet citizens associations throughout Manchuria were closed down in August 1962.

the association at Hailar, near the western

[redacted]

Manchurian border, was formally charged with having engaged in subversive activities.

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[redacted]

[redacted] additional public security troops were being assigned to the northwest Manchurian frontier in late 1962.

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[redacted]

January 1963 - The Chinese began to complain privately to foreigners concerning Russians and described the frontier with the Soviet Union as China's final and most difficult border problem.

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8 March 1963 - The Chinese Party journal People's Daily reminded the Soviets of the unequal treaties of Ili, Aigun and Nerchinsk—for the first time revealing that the Chinese were still resentful over the loss of territory ceded under under those treaties. This editorial was in part a rejoinder to Khrushchev's sneering remarks about Chinese complacency

but conveyed a thinly veiled threat that Peiping might at some future date re-examine the treaties and rectify the injustices done to China.

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August 1963 - The Chinese initiated a drive to recruit settlers in east China for Sinkiang, partly for the purpose of increasing the ratio of Chinese to national minorities.

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21 September 1963 - Replying to Peiping's 6 September 1963 charge that the Soviets were stirring up border trouble, Moscow claimed that Chinese "servicemen and civilians" have "systematically violated" the Soviet frontier many times since 1960. The USSR for the first time took notice of China's earlier intention to revise territorial

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settlements imposed on this in the 19th century. The Russians warned the Chinese that the "artificial creation" of territorial disputes would mean "embarking on a very dangerous path."

These recent Sino-Soviet polemical exchanges did not appreciably add to our knowledge of border problems, but they did reveal that border questions had become a tense and open issue between the two countries.